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# THE REA LINE MAN

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## "THE BURNS WERE ON THE HANDS"

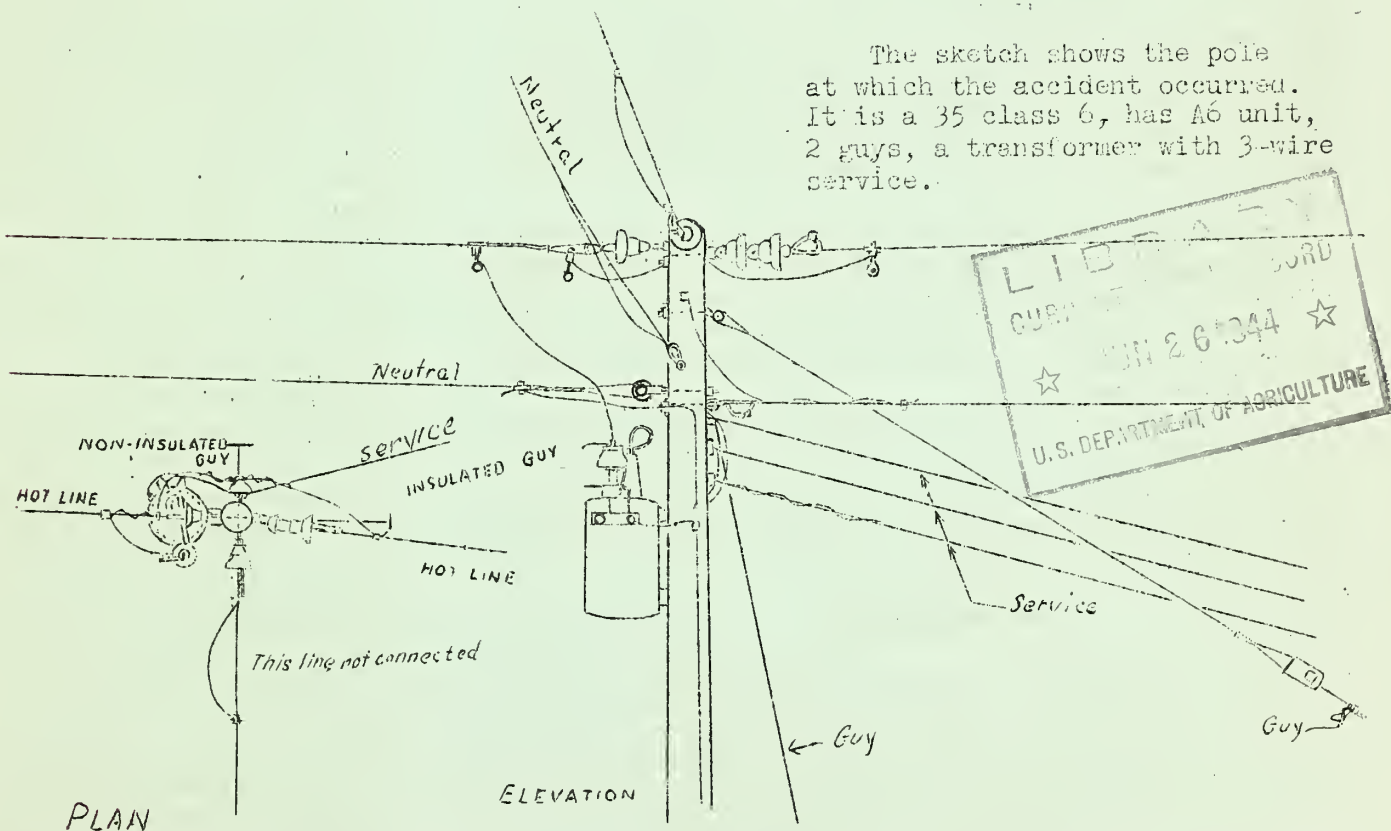
A cooperative lineman who had 15 years experience working with various voltages was killed recently when he and a foreman went out to complete an extension. After hanging a transformer on the dead-end pole at the residence to be served, they measured the distance from the house back to the tap -- 711 feet. Leaving to get a truck the foreman requested the lineman not to attempt to connect the line be-

fore he (the foreman) returned. He planned to drive to a point where they could de-energize the line before making the tap for the extension. The foreman was approximately 500 feet away and out of sight of the lineman and the tap pole. He saw a flash, and running back, saw the lineman fall. Rushing to the scene, he released the lineman's belt (which was intact) and immediately gave first aid.

Apparently the lineman was killed instantly. A farmer called the office of the cooperative while the foreman gave artificial respiration. His efforts were in vain. A doctor pronounced the lineman dead.

The lineman's spurs apparently cut out from the pole, the left hand apparently hit the hot tap on the transformer and the right hand the neutral wire. The lineman did not have on rubber gloves.

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for Employees of REA Systems

David A. Fleming, Editor

### "SPECIAL" JOBS

Experience is a great teacher. We learn to expect certain things to happen and just what to do when they do happen.

When the unexpected occurs, we consider it a special job, calling for special attention, special tools and equipment, special instruction to those working under our supervision. And we expect to get special orders from our supervisors.

Too often we consider our "regular" work as just routine jobs to be done in a casual manner without "specials" of any sort.

So, when we do these jobs, a great many of us let the bars down or drop our guard. Our experience proves to be just practice--and often a very poor practice.

Knowledge gained through experience, study and instruction is inclined to slip away if not used. We forget to size up our job and to be on the lookout for unusual occurrences, both small and large -- occurrences that can easily affect our lives.

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We are reminded of the man who had lived all his seventy years in one house on a little-traveled road. Every night he swung the wheel of his car for a left turn into his driveway. From the days of the saddle horse and the horse and buggy he had traveled the rutted road and made this left turn. Then a hard road was built by his place. The first night the road was opened his car was hit and badly damaged just as he turned in the driveway. He had followed his routine method and did not look to see whether the road was clear nor give a left-turn signal.

The man driving the other car was rather annoyed and asked the old fellow: "Why did you turn left in front of me? You didn't signal a left turn." The old man's answer was something like this: "I have been traveling this road for a long time. Everybody knows me. Everybody knows I live there and make that turn. I don't see why I should have to signal or look back."

After all the man's practice, we believe he gained some knowledge from this experience.

Let's not "drop our guard." Let's make all of our jobs "special jobs" requiring special knowledge acquired through experience, study and instruction.

### NEW SAFETY PAMPHLET

A copy of a pamphlet entitled, "Stop Carelessness - Prevent Accidents," printed by the International Harvester Company, Chicago, Illinois, has been passed on to us. This book contains several hundred actual photographs and is the best we have seen to date on farm and home safety.

### AROUND THE STATES WITH SAFETY AND JOB TRAINING

A letter from Ed Nauert, Chief Supervisor in Texas, reports O. C. Bridges succeeding Mr. Pierce as supervisor in West Texas. Welcome, Mr. Bridges. Mr. Pierce is now manager at Texas 84.

Iowa's Supervisor Ehlers is moving along nicely. Earl has a lot of territory to cover.

Michigan adds another month to their excellent no-lost-time accident record. No word from "Larry". Perhaps he is busy or safe-working position.

North Carolina Committee continues efforts to secure a competent instructor. Mr. Lackey could not accept the position.

Kentucky plans a Safety & Job Training meeting May 19 in Louisville.

Alabama's Supervisor W. L. DeVaughan reports that the program will reach all cooperatives in that state.

Mississippi's Safety Instructor, E. H. Stovall, sent us a copy of the reports of their first meeting. It looks as if it was an excellent meeting, and we have forwarded copies to several other supervisors. Stovall seems to be off to an excellent start.

Illinois and Louisiana are still seeking supervisors, or instructors, for their Safety and Job Training program.

Virginia's "Dick" Heath was accompanied by L. N. Elmore and A. B. Shehee, Safety Unit Representatives, on a visit to several cooperatives in that State. We are pleased with the interest in the program and were assured full cooperation by all.

Georgia is planning for a Safety and Job Training program.

A. B. Shehee spent one day in Atlanta with the Southern Conference of Trade and Industrial Educators.



# DISCUSSION:

We know the lineman was buckled off below the transformer; otherwise, he could not have fallen to the ground. Investigation brought out two other facts. First, the lineman was up the pole without rubber gloves, hot stick, grounding device or a hand line. Second, the foreman asked the lineman to wait at the tap pole until he (the foreman) returned with the truck. Considerable time could have elapsed while the foreman was walking 500 feet over rough ground.

Did the lineman decide to climb the pole to speed up the work and shorten the outage?

Was he going to depend on grounding jumper put on by the foreman?

Did he propose to have the foreman throw a line up to him when he returned with the truck?

Is it possible that the lineman proposed to connect the neutral wire while waiting for the foreman to return?

Did the lineman forget that the A-6 portion in the transformer was "hot"?

Was there a chance of a misunderstanding between these two men?

Did the lineman's will to get the work done cause him to disregard his orders and his knowledge of safe practice?

Both men had experience and knowledge required to do this job in a safe manner. We cannot say that rubber gloves on the hands would have prevented this accident, but we do say that strict observance of REA recommendations, based on REA experience records, would have in all probability prevented it.

Wear your rubber gloves all the way up and down on all poles carrying energized cir-

Quick thinking by Francis Kaul, of Kenyon, saved an electrician, who was about to connect a service to the yard pole, from possible electrocution. The electrician went up the pole on a ladder, an unsafe practice, and apparently got hold of bare spots on the 220-volt wires, one in each hand. Mr. Kaul thought something was wrong as the man on the pole failed to answer his inquiries, so he pulled the main switch, below the meter, and the electrician fell.

Fortunately he was only bruised although he was about unconscious from electric shock. Had he listened to Francis, who offered to open the main switch before the ascent was made, he would probably feel better now, but he was too sure of himself.

"Goodhue County REA, Reflector," Goodhue Co. Coop. Elec. Assn., Zumbrota, Minn.

D. A. Fleming attended a joint meeting of the Kansas and Nebraska Superintendents at Hutchinson, Kansas. He reports much interest for a program in both states.

cuits, or have protective grounds both ways within your sight. We are entering into that time of year when we are supposed to be more susceptible to electric shock accidents due to such things as excess perspiration and fatigue. There is sometimes insufficient help and work often becomes urgent. Now, more than ever, we must train ourselves to work together. Size up the job; be sure of a clear understanding both in giving and receiving instructions on the work to be done. Let us proceed more carefully in the performance of our duties.

John G. Waggoner, Manager of Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative, Mattoon, Illinois, writes:

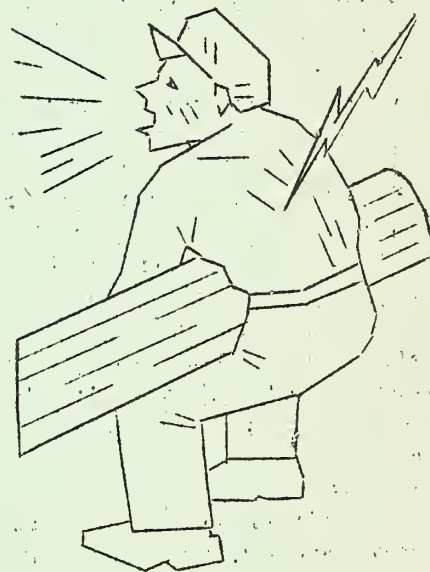
"We are glad to see "The REA Lineman" coming regularly again. We always see that each Board member receives a copy.

"At our last Board Meeting one of our Directors made a comment which we would like to pass on to you. The substance of it is as follows: 'The print is hard to read. It all seems to run together!'

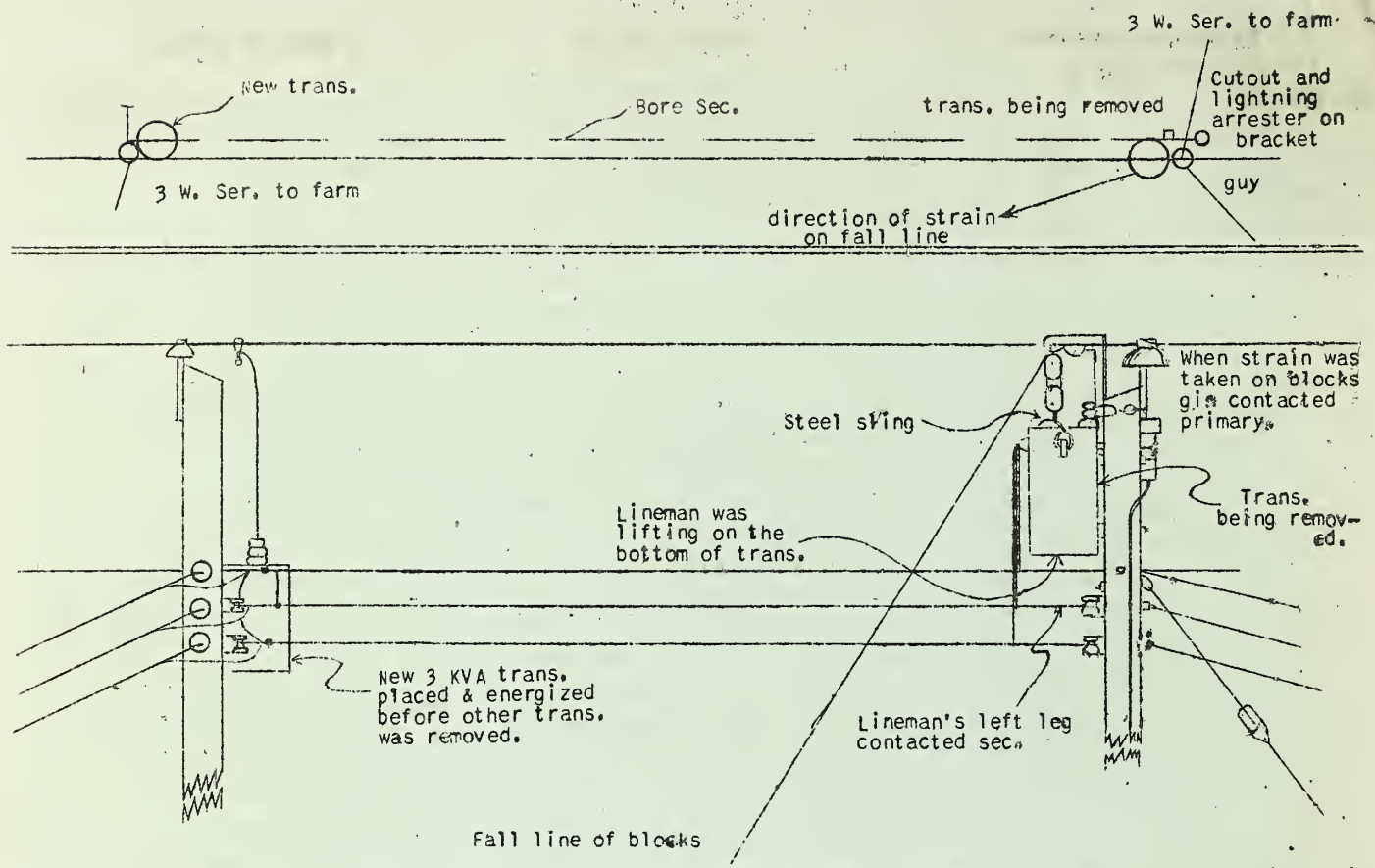
"We hadn't thought of it much before, but it does seem to run together. It doesn't read easy, particularly to someone who isn't as familiar with the language as we use it.

"However, we aren't able to just put our finger on 'why it is hard to read' but it may be partly because the paper is not very white and partly because of the style of type."

(Editor's note: In order to conserve paper we are now using varitype. However, criticisms are always welcome.)



"5,000 JCLTS"



### DISCUSSION CASE

A Safety and Job Training Supervisor sent us this report and sketch of an electric shock accident.

A lineman and his helper went to replace a transformer that was too small for the load. They installed a transformer on the adjoining pole and energized it. The lineman then went to remove the smaller transformer. He got everything ready to lower it, then took a position below the neutral and removed his rubber gloves, throwing them to the helper on the ground whom the lineman wanted to protect in case the rope came in contact with the energized primary.

The block and tackle had been used in the snow the day before and the rope was damp. When the groundman took a strain on the blocks the top of the gin came in contact with the primary. (The lineman did not see this.) The transformer did not clear the hanger bolts and the lineman took hold of the bottom of the transformer to lift it clear of the hanger bolts. When he began to lift, the secondary contacted his left leg just below the knee. There was a blinding flash and the lineman fell back in his belt. After a minute or so he came to. He then instructed his groundman to set the ladder up against the pole and came down the ladder. He was taken to the hospital by a rural mail carrier.

The blocks were inspected but no marks were found indicating burns. However, there was a burned spot on the bottom rim of the transformer.

This line could have been de-energized as there was a sectionalizing fuse six pole spans up the road. This would have been the proper procedure, for this line was not too densely populated. The job could then have been completed in less than one hour.

(Editor's note: Drawing shows transformer to be removed is still connected to the secondaries, which would make the transformer hot by way of back feed through the secondary. The internal fuse might have been blown but the transformer would still be hot. However, we believe the secondary leads were disconnected)

### SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS:

Line could have been de-energized.

Not sufficient protective equipment for all men on the job.

Not wearing rubber gloves while on an energized pole.

The use of steel slings near energized lines.

Incomplete plan of work procedure.

**THE BURNS WERE ON THE HANDS**